# Reflections

# Breakdown of US-Soviet relations

**What did you find most surprising about the breakdown of US-Soviet relations?**

“I found it surprising that the Soviet Union feared the US so much, since they are a big nation with a strong military. I also found the fact that the Soviet Union didn’t follow through with most of the agreements made at Yalta and Potsdam surprising, such as disarming war plants and appointing deputies.”

**What is the most interesting thing you’ve learned about the fate of postwar Germany?**

“I found it interesting that a local self-government was established because I thought that the US or the USSR would want to rule over Germany, and I thought that they might fear repeating history by allowing Germany to be its own nation. I also found it interesting that the government restored in Germany was based on democratic principles, since I thought that the Soviets would have a say in making the government communist or democratic.”

**What is the most interesting thing that you’ve learned about the fate of postwar Eastern Europe?**

“I found it interesting that the USSR got to keep the territory of Poland that they occupied in 1939 because I thought that Poland would get to keep all of its territory.”

**What did you find surprising about the Soviet response to the actions and attitudes of the US?**

“I found it surprising that the Soviets feared the US and feared being invaded by them.”

**What did you find surprising about the US response to the actions and attitudes of the Soviets?**

“I found it surprising that the main reason that the US distrusts the Soviets is that they have a different government from them.”

**What advice would you have given Truman regarding US policy toward the Soviet Union?**

“Learn more about communism and how it works. Discuss more with the Soviets about what the US is doing.”

**What advice would you have given Stalin regarding Soviet policy toward the US?**

“Stop getting touchy over everything the US does (atomic tests, advances in technology); instead of fretting over this, spend time thinking about improving technology, economy, etc.”

**What do you think will be the next conflict in the Cold War?**

“The Korean War.”